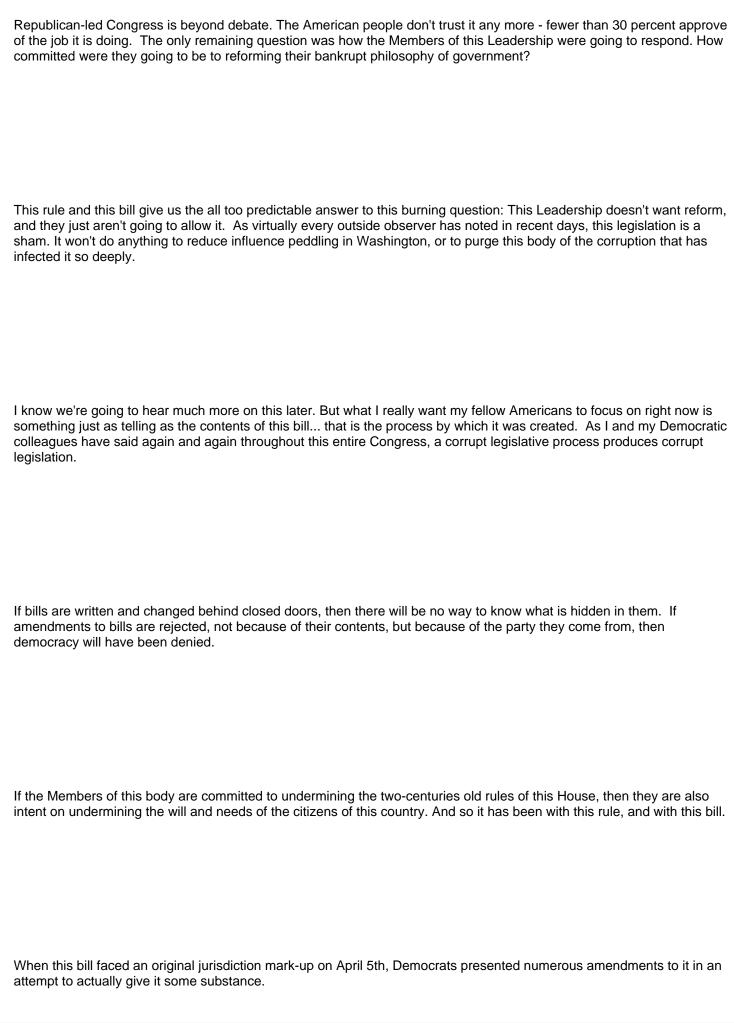
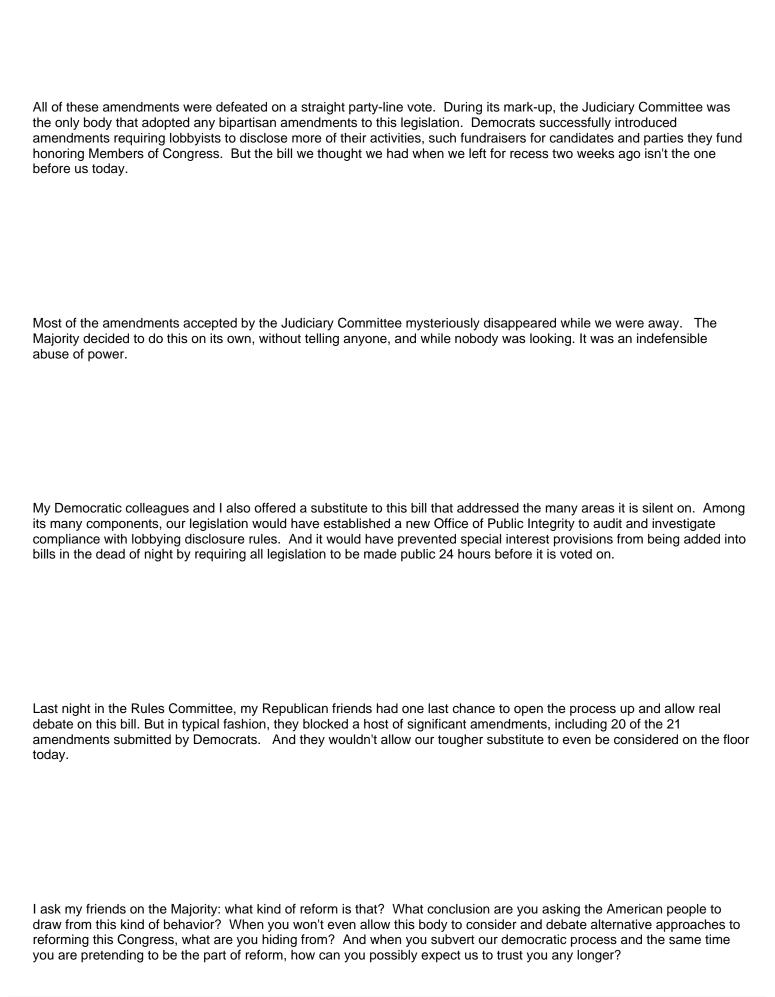
Democratic Pressure
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, April 27, 2006
FULL RETREAT: GOP Pulls Lobby "Reform" Bill in Face of Democratic Pressure
Washington, DC - Rep. David Dreier (R-CA-26) today withdrew the Lobbying Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (H.R. 4975) from consideration by the House immediately following critical statements made on the floor by Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28) and Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA-3).
It is widely believed the rule and underlying bill were pulled because the Republican leadership has lost the support of their own conference members in the face of sustained, mounting pressure from Democrats.
"The corruption of this Republican-led Congress is beyond debate" Rep. Slaughter said on the floor of the House today "The American people don't trust it any more. Fewer than 30 percent approve of the job it is doing."

"This rule and this bill give us the all too predictable answer to this burning question: This Leadership doesn't want reform, and they just aren't going to allow it," Rep. Slaughter said.
"The Republican Leadership's so-called 'reform' bill deserves to collapse under the weight of its own hypocrisy," Rep. McGovern said shortly afterward. "What everyone knows, but what the Republicans refuse to acknowledge, is that there is a direct connection between the corruption that has become so commonplace in the House and the breakdown of the deliberative process."
BACKGROUND
For months, Democrats have been putting mounting pressure on the GOP to strengthen any ethics reform bill it planned to bring to the floor.
Democrats have consistently argued that Republicans have incorrectly sought to shift blame for the corruption plaguing Congress from Members to Lobbyists. As Rep. Slaughter has said, "Lobbyists can only knock on the door. Members are the ones who have to open it."
Democrats have called not for "lobby reform," as Republicans have, but for comprehensive "ethics reform." Such a plan would not just eliminate corrupt lobbying practices, but would also reform the broken political process of the House so that corruption would be eliminated at is source. As early as January, Democrats unveiled the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act (H.R. 4682) which was designed to achieve these goals.

In addition to pressure from Democrats, criticism of Republican lobby "reform" efforts have been relentless, culminating recently in blunt denunciations of H.R. 4975 in major newspapers, including the Washington Post (click here), Roll Call (click here), and the New York Times (click here).
The complete text of Rep. Slaughter's remarks, as prepared, can be found below:
Mr. Speaker,
After a seemingly interminable era of scandal, this Congress was given the greatest opportunity in a generation to change the way business is done in Washington. We were given the chance to truly make a difference, to do something lasting.
We were given the chance to help the citizens of this nation believe in their government again. That chance has been squandered. This congress has failed. And in so doing, the hypocrisy and cynicism displayed today by the Majority of this House, will be neither missed, nor forgotten by the American people. We have before us the Lobbying Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006. It is supposed to be a reform bill.
But you can't be bold enough to reform if you don't muster the courage to address the problems. The corruption of this





When your leadership doesn't even have faith in our legislative process, how can the American people have faith in you to lead?

Lobbyists aren't the reason our Congress no longer works for working Americans. Congress is the problem. We heard so much in January from Republicans about reform. But here they are, four months later, doing exactly the same thing, and producing exactly the same result: Bad bills jammed through a broken House. Bills just like this one, that have a catchy name, but don't deliver what they promise. Bills that aren't written for the people of this nation- but rather for the special interests.

No wonder the American people are so angry. Their congressional leadership is so clearly out of touch. Every member of the majority should be ashamed of this bill today. Ashamed. At least then, you will have something in common with the American people you profess to serve.

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